













Special Advertisements.

consolation, and remember also the strength of existing German influence in the colony. It is not probable that we shall hear more of the demand now put forward.

It may be said that such a demand would have to count with at least two great Powers. Austria might not be willing, though over her annexation of Hawaii by cessions to Germany in the Samoan group, where, however, we must remember that she has always had interests which they have shown themselves quite ready to conserve. But there is England, which has interests of her own in Samoa, and which is representative and guardian also of the interests of the United States. If the principle is to be applied, it is difficult to see where the compensation is to be derived to repay England for the abandonment of English and Australian interests in Samoa. Now we have France, who has the most numerous and more extensive interests in the South Pacific. She would scarcely care to have Germany, which already is settled on one side of her in New Guinea, come and settle on the other side in Tonga.

As to the principle, it is based on the principle of compensation, France would naturally ask where she was to find compensation, a question which would, doubtless, be accompanied by a suggestion that she should have some expansion in the New Hebrides. This, however, would amount to an extrusion of England from the New Hebrides by way of compensation for her having been previously turned out of the New Hebrides. The same issue were that England acquiesced in these concessions on condition of receiving Tonga as the best equivalent the case admitted of, the further question would still remain how all these changes would be effected, and how they would be viewed by Australians.

As to the latter part of this question, there can be little doubt about the answer. We may reasonably assume that the Government would not be so far apart from the distinct encroachments which they would involve upon our trading and proprietary interests, we should view with extreme reluctance the establishment of fresh territorial settlements in the Pacific. If other powers wish to have reasonably or otherwise grown to look upon us within our "sphere of influence." Our conditions in respect to security might be materially altered for foreign Powers to get new and strong positions immediately available for attack and defence within a measurable distance from our shores. What we have to bear in mind is that the situation that has now arisen in Hawaii may at any time arise in other parts of the Pacific, and that semi-European, semi-native governments, set up in some of these islands and kept on their legs as a result of the opposite machinations of antagonistic consular or other official groups, would be exposed to the most desperate, tottering affairs at the best, and when the inevitable fall comes there will generally be some civilised Power ready to take affairs into its own hands. The doom of all such makeshift, consular governments is inevitable, and sooner or later, and experience shows that the result is some form of civilised annexation or protectorate. It is useless to think that such changes can be prevented, and that the compensation is so undeniably secure when it comes. Finally, it would be folly to suppose that the annexing or protecting Power will always be England, or that the operation will always be conducted with the same regard to the interests and susceptibilities of Australia. If we wish these interests to be safeguarded we must look after them ourselves. We cannot, indeed, act directly by diplomacy upon the foreign Powers concerned, but we can make our views known to the Government and request it to endeavour to give effect to them. It may be said that foreign Powers would disregard our representations. On the other hand, it would be a serious drawback to our interests if the Government, which annexation was held if it were known that it had been protested against and was viewed with repugnance by a rapidly growing dominion, which already numbers about four million of people, that its duty is to its interests to keep the Imperial Government informed of the way in which territorial changes in the South Seas are regarded as affecting the interests or security of Australia, or rather of the United Kingdom and colonies, which are situated on that continent. It is useless now to refer to the way in which our interests suffer from being divided and from often being at cross purposes one with the other. We must look to the future, and to the means by which they exist. Neglect to use our influence and to bring forward our views as factors in the question may operate to materially increase the future difficulties with which the Commonwealth of Australia may have to contend, and which interests of great moment to us are affected.

The question of the purposes and limitations of free railway passes granted to members of the Legislative Assembly last night in connection with the well-known case of the passenger to Mr. Black for a trip to Melbourne at the Cup season. There has apparently been a good deal of elasticity in the application of the rule respecting members' passes, and it appears to have been recognised that the privilege attaching in this respect to a seat in the Assembly extended also to members' wives, if not also to members' children and families. This extension of privilege can, of course, only be regarded as a matter of courtesy, and does not rest on the principle on which the allowance of free transit over the railways of the colony is made to members of the Legislature. The object apparently contemplated in facilitating the travelling of members of Parliament through the districts traversed by the railway lines was to enable members to inform themselves of the state of the country, and of the various districts of the colony, in the interests of which they might be called to legislate; and, as we take it, it never was contemplated that the privilege would be made a means of the gratification of members, much less for enabling them to carry on their business avocations. That it has been used for both these purposes is an open secret, and it has been frequently alleged that members of Parliament have been enabled to make money in most of the colonies, have been in the habit of using their official railway passes even to the extent of passing over the lines in the capacity of commercial travellers. That is altogether a different matter, and any one can entertain a doubt, and, taken altogether, the abuse of the members'



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taken and offered. St. Hippo receded slightly, warring for the Australian Cup, but

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